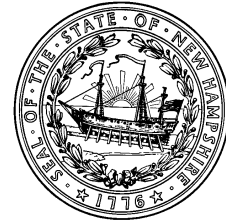


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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 4, 2009

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DHHS Expands H1N1 Vaccination to Additional Priority Groups

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) today announced the expansion of H1N1 vaccination to include additional groups of people at risk for complications from the H1N1 influenza.

Based on the amount of H1N1 vaccine expected to come into New Hampshire, the following groups are now eligible to receive the H1N1 vaccine:

- Anyone between the ages of 6 months to 24 years of age
- Adults 25 through 64 years of age with underlying medical conditions

In addition, the following groups remain eligible to receive the vaccine:

- Health care workers with direct patient contact
- Pregnant women
- People caring for or living with infants younger than 6 months old (including partners of pregnant women)

“We have reached another critical point in the vaccination process,” said Public Health Director Dr José Montero. “Now that we have been able to vaccinate most of those in the initial targeted groups we can direct the incoming vaccine to those who remain at highest risk for complications from this illness. We strongly encourage all those who are in these groups to get vaccinated as it is the single best way to prevent H1N1.”

“As we work to reach additional populations, we anticipate starting to schedule school-based clinics because this will be the most efficient and effective way to reach children,” said Montero. “We have been working with the Department of Education, the school districts and private schools, planning for this scenario. However, we want to remind people this process will take some time; there will be a limited number of school-based clinics held next week with the full schedule starting the week of December 14th.”

The school-based clinics will be held along with clinics that are already being organized through the State’s All Health Hazard Regions.

In addition to expanding the priority groups for vaccination, DHHS is declaring a Public Health Incident relative to H1N1. This declaration is an effort to proactively address the State’s ongoing response to H1N1; specifically it will allow DHHS to seek outside assistance in its response efforts.

(more)

For additional H1N1 resources and information about clinics visit www.nh.gov or call the NH Public Inquiry line between 8 and 5 by dialing 2-1-1 or 866-444-4211. Additional H1N1 resources are available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov and the US Department of Health and Human Services at www.flu.gov.

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